

# Valley Mill Camp News



## Everything You Need to Know for the First Day of Camp

Before you know it, camp will be starting! We are busy getting everything ready and are looking forward to seeing you this summer. We put out this newsletter to answer a few of the questions you may have before the season begins. If you need any further assistance, please feel free to call us here at Valley Mill Camp at 301-948-0220.

### The Camp Essentials

**The Bag** – All campers bring a backpack, a swimsuit, a towel, a water bottle and a lunch every day.

**The Lunch** – A brown bag lunch is the order of the day. Staple it shut and write your camper's name and group name on it. (You will not know the group's name until the first assembly). No lunch boxes, glass bottles, cans or anything that could crush the other lunches. Remember, the camp will refrigerate your lunches and provide 2% milk and water to drink.

**Footwear** – Campers need to wear appropriate footwear. They need to be able to run, play soccer, climb the climbing wall, wade in the lake, go on field trips and be active in all of the activities at camp. Flip flops, crocs and shoes of that style are NOT recommended. They come off too easily, so campers slow down and do less in order to keep them on. Please note: the climbing wall and soccer require a closed toe shoe. Also, we require all campers to wear footwear while wading in the lake or creek. Kayakers use aquatic sandals, aqua socks, or Teva-type sandals with some grip on the bottom. Campers may leave their lake shoes and a change of clothes in their tents if they wish.

**Water Bottle** – All campers need to carry a small water bottle with their name on it every day. Refill stations are distributed around the camp.

**Riding Clothes** – All girls who sign up for horseback riding should bring a pair of pants and sturdy shoes with a heel. The heel keeps the foot from slipping through the stirrup and the sturdy material will distribute weight in case a horse steps on a camper's foot. Riding gear can be left at camp during the week and taken home on Friday to be washed.



### Communication

E-mail is the main form of communication that we will be using this year. What we need from you is a working e-mail address that you check regularly. Even if you are returning to Valley Mill, we still need you to take these steps. Start by navigating to: <http://www.valleymill.com/vmcparents>

### Camp Fashion Report

#### What should I wear?

Valley Mill is a very outdoorsy camp. Dress in t-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts or pants, and athletic shoes or sturdy sandals. Camp is generally ten degrees cooler than the inner suburbs, and we are under the trees a good part of the day. When it is chilly, bring a sweatshirt or jacket. When it looks like rain, bring a slicker or poncho (best with a hood). If you are going to purchase new athletic shoes for camp, choose two inexpensive pairs, rather than one expensive pair. Select your oldest towels and leave purses, watches, jewelry, and designer clothes at home. The code word for dress is *rugged*.

### MARK EVERYTHING WITH A NAME!!!

**Fashion Bonus:** How can I get a Camp T-Shirt? All campers will receive a camp t-shirt on photo day. Send in the t-shirt form **NOW** to ensure that your child receives the correct size. This form can be found at [www.valleymill.com/vmcparents](http://www.valleymill.com/vmcparents).

### Contact Us

Website: [www.valleymill.com](http://www.valleymill.com)

Address: Valley Mill Camp  
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Germantown, MD 20874

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# More News . . .



## To Keep Camp a Safe & Fun Summer Experience

### First Aid Facts

Living, playing, and working outdoors necessarily exposes campers to environmental hazards. Ticks and poison ivy are two such hazards at Valley Mill. Our principle defenses are education and protection. We ask for parental assistance in this.



### Ticks

Since Valley Mill is mostly wooded, it is important to protect campers from tick bites. We urge parents to examine their children every evening. Look in the creases and folds of the body, in and behind ears, and through the hair. If a tick is found and is not attached to the skin, it can be removed with tweezers or tissues. If attached, grasp firmly with tweezers, pull straight out, and apply antiseptic to the bite. The ticks we usually see at Valley Mill Camp are called wood ticks. The ticks that carry Lyme Disease are called deer ticks. They are very tiny; they can be the size of a pencil dot. Since Lyme Disease has been reported in Maryland, we have begun a prevention program that has been proven successful in Connecticut. Since 1995, we have spread tubes of cotton balls treated with insecticide over the property. Mice take this material to their nests. The insecticide is harmless to the mice and to humans but will kill any deer tick at the beginning of its cycle. We will continue this annual treatment and provide you with the latest information.



### Poison Ivy

Poison Ivy is another hazard at camp for some children. We begin with an education program of teaching campers to identify and avoid contact with the plant. The toxin in poison ivy is an oil. The reaction is an itchy rash with clear blisters that usually appears 2-5 days after contact. The poison ivy reaction can be reduced if campers immediately wash the exposed skin with (non oily) soap and water to remove the oil. To relieve mild itching, calamine lotion, cortisone cream or cool compresses may be applied to the affected area. For more severe reactions, a doctor may prescribe oral medication. The oil from poison ivy can remain active on clothing and footwear for as long as a year. The oil can also be transmitted on pet fur. Protection might include wearing long pants on hikes and staying on the paths in areas where poison ivy is abundant.

# Even more news . . .



## Peanut-Free Camp

In response to the number of allergies to peanuts, Valley Mill Camp has a NO Peanut Policy. It is important that we make Valley Mill a safe and healthy place for all of our campers, and in order to provide a safe environment for them, we are asking the camp community: campers, staff and parents, to join together in our effort to create a peanut-free camp. We are requesting that parents pack peanut and peanut butter-free lunches and snacks for their campers. The families of the peanut allergic children are most appreciative of your support, as are we. Thank you for your understanding.

## Health Forms

All campers will be required to turn in a completed health form. The health forms do not need to be completed by a physician. However, if a camper needs to have medication administered at camp, we will need to have medication forms completed by your doctor. If your camper attends a school outside of Maryland, you will need to send a record of immunization along with a health form.

## Buddy Request

We would like to give you the opportunity to request that campers be placed in the same group as their friends. We cannot promise that this will happen, but we will try to make it happen. Please send in any requests ASAP.

## T-Shirts

We need your camper's size no later than June 1<sup>st</sup>. It is important that we order the t-shirts that early in order to get that many t-shirts to us by Photo Day.



## Privacy Permission



### PHOTOGRAPHS

We love to take photographs of our campers having fun at all of their favorite activities. Sometimes we get great shots that we want to share on our brochures and website. We never identify our campers by name, but if you do not want your child's photo published on our brochure or website, please fill out our privacy permission form.

### ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Sometimes the children like to get together outside of camp and parents need contact information from each other. Again, you can decline to have this contact information given out by filling out the privacy permission form. This privacy permission form can be accessed at [www.valleymill.com/vmcparents](http://www.valleymill.com/vmcparents) and then sent to us through MAIL or FAX at 301-948-6835.

### PARENT'S CORNER [www.valleymill.com/vmcparents](http://www.valleymill.com/vmcparents)

The parent's corner is where you can access the following forms and important information:

- Health Form
- Medication Form
- T-shirt
- Buddy Request
- Privacy Permission
- Photo Form (once camp has begun)

These forms need to be sent to camp via mail or fax at: 301-948-6835 ASAP. During the camp session, we will be posting the following information and emailing updates to you.

- Calendar of Events
- Valley Mill Newsletter
- Additional Updates